



Maryland Department of General Services

NEWS RELEASE

Martin O'Malley, Governor

Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor

Alvin C. Collins, Secretary

STATE HOUSE RENOVATION PROJECT BEGINS

New State Archives exhibit to provide alternate visitor experience

ANNAPOLIS, MD (April 9, 2008) – Beginning this week, action at the 228-year-old Maryland State House shifts from debating and passing legislation to a first-ever emptying of the most recognized building in the State. With the 2008 General Assembly session ended, work on the State House piping and HVAC project (See attached fact sheet) is set to begin. The building will be closed to the public until January 2009.

The Department of General Services (DGS) plans to have the building to be vacated by April 16th with heavy construction work beginning April 21st. Over the next week, DGS will move executive and legislative staff from the State House to temporary quarters. During construction, State Circle will be closed to traffic between North Street and School Street. Construction fences will be erected to ensure the safety of pedestrians and motorists.

PROTECTING STATE HOUSE TREASURES

DGS is working closely with the Maryland State Archives to protect the very valuable artwork and furniture in the State House. Before full-fledged construction work can begin, the Archives will implement an artifact protection plan. Some artwork will be covered and crated in place while other artifacts will be placed in temporary storage.

ALTERNATE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The State House, one of the most visited tourist attractions in Maryland, is a National Historic Landmark and the oldest state capitol in continuous legislative use. Visitors to Annapolis during 2008 will be able to see an alternative tour of the State House being created by the Maryland State Archives. It will be in the House Office Building at 6 Bladen Street and will feature objects and images from the State House. Guides from the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development's Office of Tourism State House Visitors Center staff, will be on hand to lead tours and answer questions. Entitled *Four Centuries of History in the Maryland State House*, the exhibition will open on April 14. The Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Conference and Visitors Bureau located at 26 West Street will also have information, literature, guided tours and restroom facilities.

The alternative State House exhibit will focus on the role of the state capitol in Maryland and national history from the 17th century to the present. Highlighting the important events that occurred in the State House, the exhibition will feature a selection of original artifacts from the State House including: furnishings from the Old Senate Chamber, pieces of the *USS Maryland* Silver Service, and a facsimile of George Washington's copy of the resignation speech he delivered in the State House in December 1783, the original of which was recently acquired by the Maryland State Archives. Reproductions of the historic paintings from the State House, including portraits of Maryland's Four Signers of the Declaration of Independence, will be displayed.

Four Centuries of History in the Maryland State House will be open to the public during regular hours at the House Office Building (6 Bladen Street, Annapolis, MD 21401), Monday through Friday from 9:00am to 5:00 pm. Visitors to the building will be required to show a photo ID. To inquire about scheduling a tour, please call the State House Visitors Center at 410-974-3400.

###

CONTACTS: Dave Humphrey, DGS External Affairs, 410-767-4652
Elaine Rice Bachmann, Maryland State Archives, 410-260-6445
Karen Glenn Hood, DBED, 410-767-6318



FACT SHEET

STATE HOUSE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

The primary scope of the State House piping project is to remove, upgrade and retrofit the existing heating and cooling interior piping systems throughout the State House. The current HVAC system is decaying, and this renovation will prevent any future damage as well as bring the building into compliance with current code.

Last January, the Board of Public Works authorized the award of an \$8,370,030 capital construction contract to Coakley Williams Construction, Inc., of Gaithersburg. Minority business participation on the project is 25 percent with 7 percent sub-contracting to African-American certified firms and 18 percent to women-owned firms.

With a later contract modification, requiring Board of Public Works approval, additional renovations to be considered would include removal of the wall between the Calvert and Silver Rooms to recreate the Old House of Delegates Chamber to its late 19th century appearance; conversion of the current Visitor's Center to meeting space; inclusion of the current Visitor's Center into the State Archives room; restoration of the Old Senate Chamber, including re-plastering and repainting; and a new ladies lavatory on the lower level.

DGS began restoration and renovation of the State House in 1997 with window repairs, the replacement of the acorn on top of the dome, the fire alarm and sprinkler system, and public space

repairs and refinishing. The State Archives is also working with DGS to implement a multi-year plan to upgrade the visitor experience to the State House, including new exhibits, signage, and the opening of the Old Treasury Building.

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS MEETINGS TO RELOCATE

Beginning with the meeting scheduled for April 16, 2008, Board of Public Works meetings will be held in the Joint Hearing Room of the Legislative Services Building at 90 State Circle, through January 7, 2009. There is one exception: the July 16, 2008 meeting will be held in the Treasury Building Assembly Room for the bond sale.

CONTACTS: Dave Humphrey, DGS External Affairs, 410-767-4652
 Elaine Rice Bachmann, Maryland State Archives, 410-260-6445